

**National Transportation Safety Board  
Washington, DC 20594**

**Brief of Accident**

**Adopted 09/19/1996**

LAX95FA141 File No. 1995	03/22/1995	RENO, NV	Aircraft Reg No. N9417B	Time (Local): 08:12 PST		
Make/Model:	Cessna / 208B			Fatal	Serious	Minor/None
Engine Make/Model:	P&W / PT6A-114		Crew	1	0	0
Aircraft Damage:	Destroyed		Pass	0	0	0
Number of Engines:	1					
Operating Certificate(s):	On-demand Air Taxi					
Name of Carrier:	UNION FLIGHTS					
Type of Flight Operation:	Non-scheduled; Domestic; Cargo					
Reg. Flight Conducted Under:	Part 135: Air Taxi & Commuter					
Last Depart. Point: SACRAMENTO , CA				Condition of Light: Day		
Destination: Same as Accident/Incident Location				Weather Info Src: Weather Observation Facility		
Airport Proximity: Off Airport/Airstrip				Basic Weather: Instrument Conditions		
				Lowest Ceiling: 1900 Ft. AGL, Overcast		
				Visibility: 3.00 SM		
				Wind Dir/Speed: 170 / 025 Kts		
				Temperature (°C): 1		
				Obstr to Vision: Blowing Snow		
				Precipitation: Snow		
Pilot-in-Command	Age: 43	Flight Time (Hours)				
Certificate(s)/Rating(s)				Total All Aircraft: 4388		
Airline Transport; Flight Instructor; Multi-engine Land; Single-engine Land				Last 90 Days: 126		
Instrument Ratings				Total Make/Model: 200		
Airplane				Total Instrument Time: 300		

Approaching Reno, the pilot received an instrument clearance to perform a Localizer DME-1, Rwy 16R, approach, which the FAA had previously approved for the operator's use. The localizer centerline passed over a 6,161-foot msl mountain, which was depicted on the chart. The pilot was familiar with the area, having transported cargo from Sacramento to Reno for 5 days each week since December, 1994. IMC existed and light snow showers were present. ATC issued the pilot a series of instructions as he was radar vectored toward the final approach fix (FAF), which had a minimum crossing altitude of 6,700 feet msl. The pilot misstated four of the instructions during clearance readbacks and was corrected by ATC each time. Contact with the pilot was lost following issuance of his landing clearance. The airplane impacted the mountainside at an elevation of about 6,050 feet, while tracking inbound near the centerline of the localizer course, about 2.7 nautical miles before reaching the FAF. The airframe, engine, and avionics equipment were examined. No mechanical malfunctions were found.

Brief of Accident (Continued)

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Occurrence #1:        IN FLIGHT COLLISION WITH TERRAIN/WATER  
Phase of Operation: APPROACH - IAF TO FAF/OUTER MARKER (IFR)

Findings

1. WEATHER CONDITION - SNOW
2. WEATHER CONDITION - LOW CEILING
3. TERRAIN CONDITION - HIGH TERRAIN
4. RADIO COMMUNICATIONS - NOT UNDERSTOOD - PILOT IN COMMAND
5. (C) IFR PROCEDURE - IMPROPER - PILOT IN COMMAND
6. (C) ALTITUDE - NOT OBTAINED/MAINTAINED - PILOT IN COMMAND
7. (C) DESCENT - PREMATURE - PILOT IN COMMAND

Findings Legend: (C) = Cause, (F) = Factor

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The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident as follows.  
the pilot's failure to comply with published instrument approach procedures by a premature descent below the minimum altitude specified for the approach.